

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

Preparation for War

World Economic Conference

The I.L.P.

The Peasant Movement in Hunan

The most revealing report on conditions in the Chinese villages yet published in English

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Preparation for War

THE rupture of Anglo-Soviet diplomatic relations originated in events which are already past history. The beginning of violent outrages against the Soviet Union—when the British Conservatives made it their immediate task to attain a cessation of official relations between great Britain and the U.S.S.R.—belongs to that period in the history of the British Labour movement in which the “leaders” of the working class, the reformists and hangers-on to high trade union positions, immortalised themselves during the General Strike and miners’ struggle of 1926 as traitors to the interests of the working class.

The help sent by the Soviet proletariat to their British fellow workers, during the course of the miners’ lockout, was considered by the British bourgeoisie as a direct menace by the Soviet Union to its reign of power. The trade union leaders, without definitely deciding to break with the Soviet trade unions, were at this time clearly demonstrating in their speeches (at the meetings of the Anglo-Russian Committee, and at the Trades Union Congress at Bournemouth) that they intended to pay no heed to the united front of the working class against the bourgeoisie. This gave the bourgeoisie full grounds for the belief that the “Communist menace” could quite possibly be made into a slogan that would split the ranks of the British working class.

The defeat of the miners raised the hopes of the Conservatives in their fight against the Soviets, and, at the same time, stimulated them to utilise this success to oppress the British working class, both through their internal and external policy. A break with the Soviet Union and a weakened international position for the first proletarian State was part of their internal policy, which was calculated to deal a blow at their own working class, just as the discontent in the ranks of the British proletariat was the premise for dealing frequent blows at the Soviet Union, leading up to the finale, which we have just witnessed.

And in spite of the fact that formally the Labour Party and the General Council declare themselves opponents of a breach in Anglo-Soviet relations, it is their very compromising tactics, their passion for the role of His Majesty’s Opposition, which has strengthened the

Conservatives in their determination to bring the incident to the much desired conclusion.

THE second motive force driving British reaction to settle with the Soviet State is the revolutionary movement in China, which began with the Shanghai strike and has developed in a short space of time into a national movement on a gigantic scale.

Having fed the public on legends about Bolshevik adventures in China, and about Moscow gold and Moscow agitators having caused the Chinese revolution, the British imperialists (not themselves believing in the likelihood of such an explanation) have at the same time realised that the task of smashing the Chinese revolutionary movement, whether by means of individual Chinese militarists or by direct foreign intervention, is meeting with insurmountable difficulties owing to the existence outside the boundaries of China of a Government which proclaims the principle of equal rights for all nationalities, and morally supports the Chinese revolution in its struggle against foreign imperialism.

The influence of the October Revolution on the Chinese revolutionary movement, the fact that the Chinese proletarian masses are under Communist leadership, originating from the Communist International situated in Moscow, has deepened British imperialist hatred of Moscow and moved Great Britain to break with the Soviet Union.

The huge economic consequences of the Chinese struggle against the unequal treaties for the British capital invested in Chinese factories, workshops and the railways, and for the British exporting industries (for example, the textile industry which throws a large part of its products on to the Chinese market) is forcing the British bourgeoisie, and with it the Conservative Government, to follow the development of the revolutionary struggle in China with particular vigilance.

The British bourgeoisie realises full well that the liberation of China from the yoke of the foreigner would be catastrophic for its hopes of maintaining intact its colonial possessions (and first of all the “pearl of the British crown”—India).

And British capital depends too much on the map

Preparation for War—continued.

for it not to endeavour, with the greatest possible concentration of strength, if not to turn back the wheels of history at any rate to bring them to a standstill for a short time while British imperialism closes its ranks.

The Soviet country, the proletarian dictatorship, which morally directs the struggle of oppressed humanity against the exploiting classes is looked upon by the British diehards as the main obstacle to securing real unity between Chinese reaction and British intervention.

And this is where the ambiguous position of the British reformists, who with MacDonald for mouth-piece express their confidence in the Chamberlain-Baldwin Chinese policy, proves to the British Conservatives that resistance to the anti-Soviet plan will be of a platonic character as far as the Labour Party is concerned.

THE attack on the Soviets by the British Government synchronises with two events: it is the moment chosen by the Conservative Party for launching the Trade Union Bill which deprives the British trade unions of the right to strike (a right which they have held for half a century); it is the moment for the new tactics of British imperialism in China, aimed at the destruction of the united front of the anti-imperialist forces and the creation of an internal struggle within the Kuomintang itself.

The February Note of the Baldwin Government was the first shelling of the Soviet fortifications.

Following a logical line of development this attack had as its next stage the raid on Arcos and the Trade Delegation by the police and Scotland Yard, and the decision to send the Note of May 27 announcing the breaking off of relations between both countries.

The British Labour Party, true to its tradition of opportunism and backsliding at the critical moment, in the face of the obvious menace to peace of this move of the British Government finds it possible to utter mere plausible Parliamentary phrases. At the same time it does not fail to resort, if necessary, to heights of pathos, when the question is its readiness to fight against Communism with no less ardour than the bourgeoisie itself.

MacDonald, on the day of his return from the United States (where somehow or other he managed to be the guest of President Coolidge) "challenged" the Conservatives to go to the country on the question of the break with the Soviet Union. This was nothing but a mere empty gesture, and the leader of the Labour Party fraction in Parliament himself preferred to be ill rather than to hinder his colleagues of the Foreign Office in the carrying out of their "historic" task.

This step of the British Government is fraught with serious consequences for the whole working class, which is now brought face to face with the menace of war. Having freed their hands for diplomatic and other work against the Soviet Union, the British Conservatives, of course, will not stop at attacks against the Soviet Union.

CHAMBERLAIN'S tone in part of his speech in the House of Commons on May 26, in which he endeavoured to depict the Soviet Union as the outcast of the family of nations, purposely emphasising that the U.S.S.R. is the only State which refuses to recognise the benevolent role of the League of Nations, hints at

echoes of the Locarno policy by which England endeavoured to create a position of "splendid isolation" for the U.S.S.R.

The "Daily Telegraph," a Government paper, in a much clearer and less ambiguous form expresses anxiety as to how the breaking off of relations with the Soviet Union will affect her immediate neighbours, and expresses the hope that the break will encourage them. This goes to prove that the next stage in the anti-Soviet policy of the British government will be the organisation of the border States for wholly unambiguous aims. For the military attack against the Soviet Union has been deliberately arranged through and with the help of these States, the most powerful of which—Poland—since the advent to power of Pilsudski no longer even troubles to hide her aggressive plans in regard to the U.S.S.R.

On the other hand, the reactionary circles of France, not to mention Fascist Italy, have joined Britain in their foreign policy, and look forward with joy to the possibility of a repetition, with even higher hopes of success, of the 1919-1920 experiment.

The visit of the French president to London, coinciding with the acute stage in the Anglo-Soviet conflict, and the rumours of a revival of the Anglo-French Entente, in which the Russian question played no small part—all this compels the working class and the Communist Party to be on the alert.

B RITISH foreign policy is undoubtedly aggressive. The tenth anniversary of the end of the world war may well coincide with criminal incitement to a new world cataclysm. The Soviet proletarian republic, surrounded by capitalist enemies, is the centre of the attack.

World Fascism, endeavouring to smash the working class, directs its first blows against the first workers' State of the world.

The sympathy and active support of the whole world proletariat is guaranteed to the Soviet Union. The vanguard of the proletariat—the Communist Parties—will unceasingly disclose the hypocrisy of the social-compromisers and reformists, who have too often betrayed the cause of the working class and are quite capable of some new treachery.

The working class must be on guard. For the attack on the Soviet Union is an attack on the working class. In defending the Soviet State, the working class will be defending itself against its class enemy.

*The Weekly Paper for All
Communists*

WORKERS' LIFE

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The World Economic Conference

"The capitalists divide up the world, not because of original sin, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to take this road in order to get profits. And they divide it in proportion to capital, to 'strength,' because there cannot be any other system of division in a system of commodity production and capitalism."—Lenin: "Imperialism." English edition, p. 85.

THE first proposal for the calling of a World Economic Conference of the League of Nations was made by Jouhaux at Geneva on 12th September, 1924.* Object: An act of friendship to capitalism in general; strengthening of the mendacious pacifist ideology in the working class, as though the League of Nations could peacefully settle imperialist contradictions.† An act of friendship to the French bourgeoisie in particular, which, through their influence in the League of Nations, hoped it would turn out to their particular advantage. To keep up appearances, the idea of the Conference could not be put aside, although England did make an effort in this direction. After three years of preliminary discussions, the Conference is now taking place. It would here be absolutely superfluous to give a general theoretical exposition on the inevitable failure of an attempt to remove economic contradictions in the age of imperialism by means of consultations and agreements. Lenin has proved this conclusively in his "Imperialism." The inevitable failure is quite clear to the bourgeois politicians also; hence the decision that delegates cannot make any decisions which bind their governments, so that questions of armaments should be avoided, so that the most delicate and burning questions, reparations, inter-allied debts, immigration and emigration, did not come on the agenda.

HENCE the unanimous opinion of the leading bourgeois delegates at the Conference, Treudenburg, Roucheur, A. Salter, as well as of the important economic journals, *Manchester Guardian Commercial* of March 27th, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of March 6th, *Frankfurter Zeitung* of April 22nd, etc., etc., that it would be an important result if the Conference succeeded in coming to a decision on a unified form for the general sections of trade treaties, on the formalities of tariffs, on the classification of commodities in lists of dutiable goods, in short, on the narrowly limited questions of international trade. The contradictions inherent in imperialism allowed of no further hopes. A few of the most important of these contradictions are:

1. The productive capacity of the industry of the imperialist powers is much greater than the marketing possibilities. Hence the securing of the internal markets by protective tariffs, in-

creasing building up of monopolies and dumping on the foreign market. This dumping retards the formation of new industries in countries not yet industrialised. This is the reason for the demand on the part of the small countries that dumping should be prohibited (the U.S.A. are also against it, when other countries do it!) But dumping is inseparable from the system of monopoly capitalism.

2. This system, however, itself destroys its own efficiency if it is generally employed by the large industrial states against each other. They themselves mutually ruin their internal markets by dumping. Hence the necessity for international cartels.‡
3. The rise in prices on the world market caused by the international cartels gives a new impulse to the industrialism of agricultural countries and a further decrease of sales on the world market. Hence sharper struggles within the international cartels on the question of quotas: breaking up of the cartels.
4. The industrialisation of countries is a preliminary to their military capacity. But the territorial division, above all in Eastern Europe, makes the development of a native industry capable of competing impossible, because the internal market is too small to allow production to be carried on in modern large-scale factories. Without a fully developed industry there can be no indigenous independent armament industry; hence the agricultural countries are militarily dependent on the supplies of the Great Powers: compulsion to enter one of the blocks under the leadership of the world Powers. No economic conference can free the small countries from this painful situation.
5. The large industrial states who secure their own spheres against the import of foreign industrial commodities by protective tariffs preach free trade to others.‡ The U.S.A., France, Germany, Italy are raising their tariff walls ever higher: England is turning hesitatingly in the same direction. At the same time, propaganda against protection is being carried on, particularly by commercial and banking capital. (See the "Manifesto of the Bankers"), and wherever the imperialist Powers have the power, as in China, they have prevented by force the introduction of protective tariffs. In general, however, this is impossible. So we see the entire

‡ The creation of international cartels in all spheres is recommended by the Zürich Professor Grossmann in his Memorandum, "Systèmes de Rapprochement Economique," published by the League of Nations. The Industrialists of France and Germany followed this lead at the Conference.

‡ "It is what one demands of others." Mr. Hermant rightly remarks ("Revue politique et parlementaire," v. 10, iv., 1927) that this expression of Talleyrand on the subject of free trade is most suitable for the present time.

* B. Harms: "From Economic War to Economic Conference." Jena, 1927. p. 328.

† Jouhaux applied the weapon of "realistic pacifism" at the same time in practice, as Hilferding did the "theory."

The World Economic Conference—continued

capitalist world divided by protective walls growing ever higher. No economic conference can help.

6. The whole interest of the industrial bourgeoisie of the imperialist Powers is to hold back the industrialisation of the agricultural countries; but the individual mania for profits of the separate capitalists leads them to establish new factories in the agricultural countries protected by tariffs if their internal markets appear sufficiently profitable. That leads to a further intensification of the discrepancies between productive and selling capacity. The World Economic Conference is helpless against this development.
7. The bourgeoisie of the different States are monopolising even more important raw materials. Their monopoly means a heavy burden for the others. But monopolist control of important raw materials is one of the fundamental principles of imperialism. It will not be possible at the Economic Conference to decide anything against it.
8. The peoples of Europe, China and India, closely crowded together, fight for their existence. In the U.S.A., in Canada, in Australia there is still, however, land in great abundance. But the "East Europeans," the yellow and brown races, are not allowed to immigrate to the far fields of the English colonial settlements. Even an investigation of the question was forbidden at the Conference. Land, actual and potential sources of raw materials must be reserved for the ruling class.

None of these questions can be solved within the framework of imperialism. The Liberal pacifists (Norman Angell before the war) and the reformists* deny or hush up what is most important in the new stage of capitalism, just its imperialist character, and try to hammer out new ways and means of solving the contradictions of modern economics within the framework of capitalism.

CAPITALISM to-day finds itself in a declining state: the Socialist Soviet Republic already exists as the first great foundation stone of the future: the movement for liberation of the colonial peoples has to-day grown into a blazing fire that burns the props of the capitalist world; there is the Third International, true revolutionary Communist Parties in all capitalist countries.

We divide the contradictions into three groups:

- (a) The struggle between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union.
- (b) The struggle between imperialist States and the oppressed colonial and semi-colonial peoples.
- (c) The struggle between the imperialist Powers themselves for a re-division of the world.

These three groups of contradictions interact in a

variety of ways, and present a picture extraordinarily full of contradictions: everything is still in a state of flux; no firm blocks have yet been built up, but the development is towards a new world war. Concretely, we may say:

There are to-day four imperialist Powers, who are conducting independent world policies, the U.S.A., England, Japan and France: all other capitalist countries can only conduct a policy among these principal Powers, or as a part of the political blocks led by them. The positions of these principal Powers—although they all conduct an imperialist policy—are very different.

The U.S.A. have developed very rapidly into the leading imperialist Power. The immense internal market, the rapid extension over the American continent, which succumbs almost without a struggle to the imperialism of the U.S.A.* the possibility of investing capital in Europe at high rates of interest, assures to American capital a great advantage over its competitors. In Asia the U.S.A. keep careful watch that no imperialist Power brings China under its influence, and at the same time establish more firmly their strategical points in the Pacific, and are endeavouring to increase their influence in Australia.

THE British Empire rests upon its enormous colonies. It can only expect to suffer loss from every re-division. To defend the position they have already won, against imperialist rivalry, against the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, against the proletariat, is the system of present-day British policy. The arming of the world Powers for a re-division of the world, the liberation movement of the colonial peoples, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat (which forms the majority of the population of the Mother Country, and whom the English bourgeoisie can no longer offer the position of a working class aristocracy) are real and grave dangers for the English bourgeoisie, although to varying extents. Behind the colonial movement for freedom and behind the revolutionary working-class movement, the English bourgeoisie sees the Soviet Union. That is its chief enemy, which must be wiped out of existence.

Japan is an Asiatic, a Pacific Power. It is conducting in China a cunning and malicious offensive. There it comes into conflict with the United States, which until now have successfully prevented Japan from usurping the position of principal Pacific Power.

FRANCE is, first and foremost, a continental European and Mediterranean Power. Her most important colonies are in Africa, although she also possesses valuable colonies in Indo-China. With a relatively small population, France has the best equipped land forces in Europe. The attempt of the French bourgeoisie to bring Europe under its dominion by the defeat of Germany, and by a complicated system of alliances, founders on the weakness of its own economic basis, and on the opposition of England, Italy and even Germany. France is the natural ally of any State which,

* The I.F.T.U. acclaimed the calling of the World Economic Conference, in its May Day Appeal, as a success for the ideas of the working class (!) "Vorwaerts," 27-4-1927.

* There is indeed a strong ideological movement for the banding together of Latin America for the purpose of making a stand against the U.S.A., but up to the present this movement is powerless against the advances of the U.S.A.

The World Economic Conference—continued

together with France itself, benefited territorially by the world war, and has fear of a new territorial division: Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia and Roumania. This block, which was once very strong, has become disunited by the policy of England to encircle the Soviet Union and the offensive which Italy has made in the Balkans.

Germany makes its way among the contradictory tendencies in the foreign policy of the world Powers.

It steers its way between the Great Powers. It gives loans to Russia, concludes international cartels with France, conducts a tariff war against Poland, and attempts to play the rôle of agent to American capital in Europe. On the other hand, it is the plaything of the intrigues between France and England, who for the time being pretend a reconciliation with Germany, if they want something from each other in other questions of foreign policy—and finally unite to the cost of Germany. The Geneva Protocol, Locarno, Thoiry, great hopes and swift disappointments for Germany, which again and again is used by the victorious Powers as a pawn in the game.

EAST EUROPE is a jumble of insoluble conflicts: Germany—Poland, Roumania—Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia—Hungary, Italy—Jugo-Slavia, Jugo-Slavia—Bulgaria, etc. As long as the decisive policy in Europe—that of the two world Powers, France and England—was firmly directed solely towards the maintenance of the position created by the Peace Treaty, these political conflicts remained latent.

If, however, England now attempts to organise all these States in an active offensive against the Soviet Union, at least in a state of sympathetic neutrality

towards those States actively engaged in this offensive, then these conflicts may become acute before England has completed its war preparations against the Soviet Union.

There arises the peculiar development that although from the class standpoint all capitalist States are the common foes of the Soviet Union, the attempt to create a united class front intensifies the contradictions among the capitalist countries.

The position is the same in the colonial question. The common interests of the colonial Powers would make a united front of all against the colonial movements for freedom seem the most natural thing. But such a united front, in consequence of the opposition between imperialist world Powers, as the example of China shows, has a chance of success only if the movement for freedom begins to show an anti-capitalist development: if the colonial danger appears in common with the Communist danger.

IT is clear that in such circumstances the World Economic Conference must lead to a complete failure.

Among the 35 States whose delegates will be present there are hundreds of points of conflict, both unsolved and only soluble by arms. Empty resolutions of a general nature will be accepted in order to help reformists to deceive the proletariat about imperialist war preparations and to send the proletariat to sleep: perhaps in technical subsidiary questions such as tariff formalities and classification, some reform may be introduced; that will be all. But the representatives of the world Powers will take the opportunity of winning over the smaller States by offering them different advantages. England particularly will try to build up the anti-Soviet front. The Conference is of significance, not by its public proceedings, but by its actions behind the scenes.

France and the Menace of Imperialist War

Pierre Semard

THE problem of markets has dominated international relations more and more completely since the war of 1914-1918, and a fierce covert struggle is being carried on continuously for the conquest of markets, in spite of the agreements and alliances made between States.

Conflicts between the imperialists are happening almost everywhere, and determine the economic struggles which industrial and trade agreements cannot settle. These agreements are nothing but temporary truces in the frantic rivalry, the continual struggle for the conquest and capture of new markets. These insoluble contradictions lead inevitably to new world conflicts.

For Continental Europe alone international trade is only 94 per cent. compared with 1913, whereas production exceeds 104 per cent. Europe's part in the total of international trade has decreased from 39.3 per cent. to 33.1 per cent.

Such are the reasons for the economic war between States in progress which the Treaty of Versailles with

its 7,000 kilometres long Customs barriers, has rendered even more acute.

Called "Peace"

The struggle for influence between the big imperialist powers; France, Great Britain and Italy, fighting in the Balkans and for supremacy in the Mediterranean; political and economic conflicts continually taking place between Germany and Poland, France and Germany, Italy and France, Great Britain and Germany, Great Britain and France—these are so many sources of war which certain agreements between powers are making even more acute.

In fact, since the conclusion of the imperialist slaughter of 1914-1918, since the Versailles Treaty, which by effecting a new partition of the world has created a source of conflict between the victorious and the vanquished States, struggles, wars, and guerilla warfare have become an institution; conflicts between Germany and Poland for Upper Silesia, the Greco-Turkish

France and Imperialist War—continued

war for Smyrna, the Italo-Yugo-Slav war for Fiume, military conflicts between the Balkan States, intervention of capitalist States against the proletarian revolution in Hungary, intervention of White generals in the pay of the imperialists against the U.S.S.R. accompanied by an economic blockade, Poland, armed by the imperialists, making war on the U.S.S.R., military occupation of the Ruhr, colonial wars in Morocco and Syria; and nearer home the Franco-Italian tension on the Mediterranean problem, the recent Italian-Yugo-Slav conflict provoked by Fascist aspirations in regard to Albania, armed intervention by America against Nicaragua and Mexico, and imperialist intervention against the Chinese revolution.

The Reason—Markets

These numerous conflicts originating in the clash of interests between States and in their need for markets have made war a permanency. And there is every sign that this state of war is tending to extend and threatens to degenerate finally into an enormous conflagration which would exceed by far that of 1914-1918 in its violence and in its political and economic consequences. Yet it is towards this cataclysm, which will disorganise the whole world, that the big capitalist Powers are marching, by organising war in China and by making feverish preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. in order to destroy these two revolutionary forces, which are a permanent menace to the capitalist regime, and to conquer and keep these two immense markets, without which international capitalism cannot exist.

This orientation of the struggle of the imperialists against the U.S.S.R. is not new, it is only entering upon a more active stage which they wish to be decisive.

For the purpose of crushing both of these countries, Great Britain has decided on a policy of provocation and military intervention in order to establish an imperialist united front. The insolent note addressed by Chamberlain to the U.S.S.R., the attacks on diplomatic couriers and on the Soviet institutions in Peking, Shanghai and London, and the intrigues in the border States of the U.S.S.R., on the one hand, the British provocations and manœuvres in China, the bombardment of Wanh sien and Nanking and the intrigues with Chiang Kai Shek and Chang Tso Lin to make them attack Bolshevism in China on the other hand, are all of them hostile acts and manifestations into which British imperialism has endeavoured to draw all the Great Powers.

For years British imperialism has been intervening in the political life of Poland and Lithuania, where a coup d'état which it financed has put a Fascist Government into power. It is endeavouring now to alienate Latvia, which has signed a treaty of neutrality with the U.S.S.R., and it is bringing pressure to bear on Bulgaria and Roumania to draw them into this vast anti-Soviet front, extending from Finland to Roumania; it hopes that this front will be joined by Germany also, and is bringing pressure to bear.

All these preparations for war against the Chinese revolution and the first proletarian revolution go on under the slogan of struggle against Communism and Bolshevism; they are accompanied by a recrudescence of repressive measures against the labour movement and its revolutionary organisations, while armaments are being

amassed everywhere and industrial rationalisation is supplemented by a system of military rationalisation, aiming at the mobilisation of all the political, economic, intellectual and social forces and organisations for war.

It is upon this reactionary and warlike career that French imperialism has embarked. It is trying, and trying now, to come to an understanding with British imperialism for joint political and military action in China and against the U.S.S.R.

French Imperialism Preparing War

French imperialism has not enough scope for development within its own frontiers; its industrial production has increased over 30 per cent. since the world war. As its home market is limited it stands in need of foreign markets as an outlet for its manufactured goods; otherwise its productive apparatus will be in jeopardy and it runs the risk of a serious economic crisis, which might develop into a crisis of class rule.

That is why it is pursuing, side by side with the policy of financial stabilisation and industrial rationalisation carried on at the expense of the toiling masses, a policy of exploitation of the colonial peoples under its domination, and is perpetuating wars of conquest in order to secure outlets and new markets.

The French ruling class is carrying on at home a struggle against Communism, and their foreign policy is approximating more and more to the British policy; this is due to the fact that the interests of French imperialism in Europe and in the Far East, in regard to China and also in regard to the U.S.S.R. are identical with those of the other imperialists and with those of Great Britain in particular, and also because it feels the necessity of defending its colonial "Empire" against "revolutionary infection"; for Indo-China just as India lies at the gates of China.

Mutually Agreed Upon

The struggle carried on in France against Communism and Bolshevism does not differ in the least from the struggle carried on by British imperialism. Moreover, the statesmen of the two countries have met several times to arrange all details in connection with this. While a raid is being made on the Soviet Trade Delegation in London for the purpose of provoking the U.S.S.R. to break off diplomatic relations and declare war; in Paris a big conspiracy is organised in which active Communists are branded with spying and efforts are made to associate with it and to discredit the Soviet Embassy. This is to prepare public opinion for the blow to be dealt, at the insistent demand of the reactionary press, "against the centre of Bolshevik agitation in Paris."

Active Communists are persecuted and imprisoned here and there in order to paralyse the Labour movement and to weaken at the same time the resistance of the working class to financial stabilisation and industrial rationalisation and the opposition of the mass of workers and peasants to war, as well as their action against imperialist intervention in China and against the U.S.S.R. To destroy Communism at home in order to demolish with greater ease the stronghold of Bolshevism, the U.S.S.R.—such are the aspirations of the imperialists. The French rulers who have openly declared war on Communism "which is the enemy," proceed at the same

France and Imperialist War—continued

time with a systematic increase of armaments and with the reorganisation of the army.

The Bill for reorganisation of the army introduced by the Socialist leader, Paul Boncour, provides for the mobilisation of the entire nation irrespective of age and sex and the militarisation of the various labour associations and trade unions; this underlines the openly imperialist policy of France and its active participation in the general plan of the imperialist offensive.

Still Pacifist Phrases

However, the rulers and their associates, the Socialist leaders, are still disguising these war preparations by "pacifist" phraselology and by assurances of "neutrality" in order to lull to sleep the vigilance of the masses by declaring that the organisation of the "armed nation" is a means to prevent war, merely a means for the defence of the fatherland in the event of an attack. But the rash statement of Paul Boncour, the deadly enemy of Bolshevism, that Polish soldiers keep guard over civilisation in order to defend it against Muscovite barbarism, throws light on the real aim and the character of the war which is being prepared. The violence of this war, he predicts, writing: "Total war, a war of peoples, a war which will bring into play all the resources and the entire machinery of the nation! We must, therefore make provisions for the whole machinery which at the very beginning of mobilisation, and as if by clockwork, will make everything which produced for peace produce for war."

And the Socialist leaders have certainly foreseen everything! Not only mobilisation for war, irrespective of age of sex, but also placing at the disposal of capitalism a formidable professional army which will break down strikes and all social movements.

Pacifists Preparing War

They devoted themselves during the entire reign of the left bloc to a big pacifist agitation, supporting that of the then government (which denied any war menace and proclaimed the will to peace of all rulers and the virtues of the League of Nations); they represented the agreements between states and the formation of trusts and international industrial syndicates as making for peace, declaring that this period of "super-imperialism" means diminution of the war menace. And while pursuing this pacifist agitation they voted credits for wars in Morocco and Syria! Even to-day, under the Poincaré regime, their attitude has not changed; their opposition to the "National Union" government is wholly "pacifist," and they are preparing on its behalf total mobilisation for total war, while proclaiming the will to peace of bellicose Poincaré and accusing "Red imperialism" of being solely responsible for the conflicts and movements towards freedom which have aroused the colonial and semi-colonial peoples against their capitalist exploiters and oppressors. At the same time they are carrying on a campaign of calumnies and lies against Communism and Bolshevism intended to prepare "morally" the war against the U.S.S.R.

Henceforth it is the historic role of the social patriots, the defenders of capitalism in its "democratic" form, to draw the masses into war and into the sacred

union with the bourgeoisie, and the French Socialist leaders are in the forefront of the traitors. At present they "are giving a free hand to the Poincaré experiment" by supporting financial stabilisation and industrial rationalisation, and by paralysing the collective resistance of the proletariat to the capitalist offensive against wages and the eight-hour day. Their propaganda in favour of the League of Nations, on the pacifism of France (coming after the support of the Dawes' Plan and of the Locarno agreements which they represent as peace factors), creating the illusion that imperialist wars were becoming impossible, have all helped to relax the vigilance of the toiling masses against war. At present they are cynically deceiving the workers by accusing "Red Militarism" of endangering peace, by saying that Communism and Bolshevism want war in order to make revolution. This is said for the purpose of inciting them against the U.S.S.R. and against the Communist International.

This odious campaign of abuse against the U.S.S.R. which the imperialists provoke and endeavour to develop into war, would enable the Socialist leaders to proclaim the necessity of defending the fatherland which has been attacked, and to call the war which they prepared a war of defence in order to consolidate still more the sacred union with the bourgeoisie!

The Example of China

Is not this their attitude in regard to the Chinese revolution? Have they not declared themselves in favour of the formation of a "democratic" government, attacking Bolshevism (which they make responsible for the prolongation of civil war) and declaring themselves in favour of defence of the imperialist concessions?

This only confirms once more their role as agents of the bourgeoisie, whose democratic and pacifist phraseology they espouse in order to be able to attack more effectively the dictatorship of the proletariat. Like the capitalists, they are the deadly enemies of Bolshevism and therefore of the U.S.S.R.: the great, the only fatherland of the oppressed, the only power which really and truly wants peace, which on one-sixth of the globe is building up Socialism, because they have repudiated Communism in favour of petty bourgeois democracy and because it is a living reproach to all their denials and betrayals. Since 1914 they have preferred class collaboration and united front with the bourgeoisie to direct class action, to the united front of the proletariat and to revolutionary struggle for the seizure of power. In the imperialist war, as well as in civil war, they will always be on the side of the capitalists.

This is what we must make the mass of workers and peasants realise, putting them on the alert and mobilising them against the war which is already going on in China, and which the imperialists are feverishly preparing against the U.S.S.R.

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The Peasant Movement in Hunan

(A Report published in the central organ of the Communist Party of China, "The Weekly Guide," 12th March, 1927.)

I.

ON my return to China I made a tour from January 4 to February 5, through five districts of Hunan: * I'siengsu, Siansian, Chunshan, Tsienlin and Changsha. I called meetings of comrades working among the peasants, heard their reports and discussions and in this manner received a good deal of material. I have seen things such as were never seen or heard of before. Since a similar state of affairs apparently exists in all provinces, the mistakes made there must be set right as soon as possible, and the sooner the better.

The rising surge of the peasant movement now constitutes an extremely vital problem. Before very long millions of peasants in Central, North and South China will rise and their force will be more terrible than that of a hurricane. No matter what force tries to stop it, it will have to give way before their onslaught in the struggle for freedom. The imperialists, the militarists, the old government officials, the gentry and the rich peasants will be swept off their feet. The question now arises; should we take the lead in this movement; or should we hang on at its tail and merely criticise? Everyone of us must make this choice, and be quick in doing so, too.

I shall now give an outline of my observations and ideas and let comrades judge for themselves.

They Begin to Organise

The peasant movement in Hunan province, extending from the south and central part of the province to all districts, can be divided approximately into two periods.

The first period, from January to September of last year, was a period of organisation. Between January and July it passed through an illegal period, and from July to September (with the arrival of the revolutionary armies), a period of open work. At that time there were about 300,000 to 400,000 members in the Peasant Leagues, which had direct leadership over one million people. There were at that time no struggles in process in the rural districts, and consequently there was no criticism. As the members of the Peasant Leagues worked for the armies as spies and guides, the military authorities thought highly of them.

The second period—from October, 1926 to January, 1927—was a revolutionary period. The number of members of the Peasant Leagues increased to two millions, and the number of people under their direct leadership to over 10,000,000 (at least one member of each peasant family belongs to a League).

About one-half of the peasantry of the Hunan province is organised in the Peasant Leagues; in the districts of Sianchu, Siansian, Luian, Changsha, Tsuilin,

Ninsian, Piutsian, Sianin, Chunshan, Chunian, Mayan, Liansian, Anhui, etc., almost all the peasants belong to the Leagues and carry out their instructions.

The peasants have already strong organisations and have started to be active. We may say that during the four months, from October of last year to January of the current year, a great rural revolution has taken place.

Down with the "Gentry"

The main objects of the peasants' attack are the gentry, rich peasants, the nobility, rural clergy, the old officials, the urban bureaucracy, and the rural money-lenders. The force of their attacks is "like that of a hurricane"; those who submit survive and those who resist perish. As a result, the ancient rights of the feudal lords and the nobility have been brushed aside and abolished. They "sweep the ground like the wind." The power of the gentry is declining and the Peasant Leagues have become powerful organs, which carry into effect the slogan "All Power to the Peasant Leagues." Even petty family quarrels are brought before the Peasant Leagues for settlement; and whatever the Peasant Leagues decide is law.

The Peasant Leagues carry on their activities in the rural districts according to the dictum "no sooner said than done," and even outsiders say that the Peasant Leagues are all right. They cannot say otherwise. The gentry, rich peasants and the landlords are crushed; they dare not say anything against the Leagues. Some of them flew to Shanghai, Hanchow, Changsha, and other towns—those who remained in the villages join the Peasant Leagues.

"Here are ten dollars—please accept me as a member of the Peasant League"—entreat the poor gentry.

The peasants reply:

"Hm!! . . . Who wants your dirty money?"

A section of the middle and small landowners and middle peasants, at first opposed to the peasant unions, now want to join them. I went about a great deal and everywhere I met people who said to me:

"We should like the delegate who has come from the province to do us a favour and not enter us on the 'special register.'"

(Under the former Tsin Dynasty (Manchu) two registers were kept of the population; the ordinary register and a special register. All decent people were entered on the "ordinary register," whereas robbers, pillagers, and such like people were entered on the "special registers." This method is applied now in some places by the peasantry, who enter all those who are against the peasant unions on the "special register.")

These people, of course, do not want to be entered on the "special register" and use every possible means for getting admission into the peasant union. They do not rest content until their names appear on the register of the peasant union, because the latter inflict severe punishment and do not give any peace to those whose name does not appear on the union register.

* Hunan is a province more than twice the size of Ireland, lying between Canton and Hankow, and is not to be confused with Honan, further north.

Peasant Movement in Hunan—continued

“ In the villages the peasants have disturbed the peace of the gentry. Village news goes from mouth to mouth and reaches the towns, and the urban gentry have also become alarmed.

When I got to Chansha, I met people there from various places, and listened to many conversations in the streets between middle and upper class people, including right wing Kuomintanglers. In all these conversations, the expression “it is bad” or “it is very bad,” cropped up. And even progressive people say:

“Of course, all this cannot be otherwise in time of revolution, but nevertheless it is bad.”

It seems that it is impossible to avoid the expression “it is bad.” But is it really true?

Very Good and Very Bad

If we compare the present with the past, we see that the peasant masses have begun to fulfil their historical mission. The democratic forces of the countryside have begun to overthrow the feudal forces. And this overthrow of feudalism is precisely the real aim of revolution. Sun Yat Sen worked 40 years for the national revolution, and did not accomplish it; the peasantry have accomplished it in the course of a few months. They overthrew the patriarchal and feudal gentry, the rich farmers and big landowners, who held political sway for ages and who were the mainstay of imperialism, militarism and bureaucracy. Such a thing has not been heard of for thousands of years, but it has happened now and it is “very good”—not at all “bad” and certainly not “very bad.”

If we consider the whole question of the democratic revolution as a whole, the share of the urban population and of the army in it is 30 per cent. and the share of the peasantry 70 per cent. The expression “very bad” voices the views of the big landowners who attack the peasantry, it shows that these landowners do not want to part with the old feudal order. These views are an obstacle to the establishment of a new democratic order—they are counter-revolutionary views. Revolutionary comrades should not make use of this expression. If you are a person holding really revolutionary views, you should feel as you get into the rural districts that something extraordinary has happened: innumerable masses of peasant slaves have overthrown their exploiters, and this is “very good.”

“Very good” expresses the opinion of the peasantry and of all revolutionary parties. All revolutionary comrades should know that in a national revolution, big changes must take place among the peasantry. There

were no such changes in 1911 and the revolution was defeated: now we have these changes, which is a fact of the utmost importance. All revolutionary comrades should defend and protect these changes, and if they do not do so, they are counter-revolutionaries.

“Going Too Far.”

Some people say:

“There must be peasant unions, but at present they go too far in their actions”.

This is the opinion of the “Centre Party.” But is it true to fact? There is certainly a certain amount of “disorder” in the villages. The peasant unions are very strong; they do not allow the big landowners to express their views, they have destroyed their forces, they have overthrown them and are treading them under foot. Sometimes it is said: if you have land of your own, you are a landowner. In some places peasants owning 50 mows of land are called “gentry” and those who wear a long gown are called “de-sheng” (nobles), and the cry is raised: “Enter them on the special register”... The gentry and the “de-sheng” are fined and punished; if they resist, their houses are raided, their pigs are killed, their corn is taken away and even the sisters and wives of the gentry and the “de-sheng” are kicked. If anyone goes out wearing a tall hat, he is put down as a “de-sheng.”

The views of the “Centre Party” have some justification, but in substance they are erroneous. First of all everything that has just been mentioned is applied only against the gentry, the “de-sheng” and the big landowners. Formerly they exploited the peasants, and now the peasants are paying them back. Wherever the gentry, the “de-sheng” and the big landowners exploited the peasants most, the reaction to this is strongest. The peasants are quick in recognising who is a “de-sheng” and who is not, who is to be punished severely and who is to be treated leniently. That is why Tan Ming Yan said: “In nine cases out of ten, the peasants are doing the right thing when they attack the gentry and the ‘de-sheng.’”

No Parlour Manners

Secondly, revolution cannot be carried on with drawing-room manners; it is not like painting pictures or writing books—it is not as aesthetic as all that. Revolution is the rising of one class to overthrow another class. The peasant revolution is a revolution in which peasants overthrow the power of the feudal landowners. If the peasants do not make use of their full power, they will not be able to overthrow the power of the feudal landlords whom they have maintained for thousands of years. There must be a strong revolutionary spirit in the villages, for otherwise the peasantry cannot become a big revolutionary factor. All the above-mentioned actions, spoken of as “going too far,” originate in the strong revolutionary surge in the villages, in the national revolution, and this is absolutely necessary in the second period (the revolutionary period) of the peasant movement. In the course of the second period, it is essential to make the power of the peasantry absolute, it is essential not to allow others to criticise the peasant unions, it is essential to overthrow and trample under foot the power of the “de-sheng.” Therefore all these

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Peasant Movement in Hunan—continued

actions spoken of as "going too far" have a revolutionary meaning in this second period.

In fact, it is essential to have a temporary reign of terror in the villages, otherwise it will not be possible to crush the activity of the counter-revolutionary parties there. It will be impossible to overthrow the "de-shengs."

Contrary views impede the development of the peasant movement, they could undo the revolution. It is impossible for us not to be against them.

The "Riff-Raff" Movement

The right wing of the Kuomintang says:

"The peasant movement is a movement of the peasant 'riff-raff,' it is a movement of the lazy peasants. . . . This opinion particularly prevails in Changsha.

When I travelled through the country, the gentry said:

"The peasant leagues can act, but it is necessary to change their leaders. . . ."

The gentry as well as the right wing of the Kuomintang say that the peasant movement must exist (as the peasant movement already exists and no one will attempt to say that it ought not to exist) but that the leaders of the movement must be changed. In speaking of the leaders of the lower organisation of the Peasant Leagues, they refer to them as the "riff-raff." These are the people about whom they used to say that they are possessed of four of the greatest evils; then they were exploited but now they have raised their heads. Not only have they raised their heads; they have taken power into their hands. The Peasant Leagues have become sharp instruments in their hands. They tie their "de-shengs" with cords, put high hats on their heads and lead them through the villages (in the districts of Sianchu and Siansian this is known as "walking in a circle"; in the district of Tsyulin this is known as "coming in crowds"). These gross acts reach the ears of the "de-shengs" daily.

The people who formerly stood above all are now classed as the lowest. That is why this is called "revolution."

The Revolutionary Vanguard

We can regard any man or any object from two opposite points of views. As an example, we can take such conceptions as "very good" and "very bad"—as "riff-raff" and as the "revolutionary vanguard."

It has been stated above that the peasants have accomplished very great unprecedented revolutionary deeds; the peasants have done the most important work of the nationalist revolution. But did all peasants participate in that great revolution, in that vital revolutionary work? No.

The peasants are divided into three classes: the rich, the middle and poor peasants, and the attitude of the three classes to the revolution is not the same, just as their economic position is not the same.

During the first period the rich peasants (those who have a surplus of money or grain are classed as the rich) spoke only about the defeats in Kiangsi.

"Chiang Kai Shek has been wounded in the leg; he took an aeroplane and flew to Kwantung"; "Wu Pei Fu has retaken Yuchow"; "The three democratic

principles can never be realised because they have never been in force hitherto."

The leaders of the Peasant Leagues (largely the "riff-raff") showing their League lists would say:

"Please join our League."

The rich peasants would reply:

"Peasant Leagues! I have lived here many years; many years have I cultivated my land; and I never saw a Peasant League. Yet I was never hungry. Better forget about it!"

The best of the rich peasants would say:

"What kind of Peasant Leagues are you talking about? Is it a league for chopping off human heads? We must not hurt the people."

And the "de-shengs" would say:

"It is very strange that the Peasant Leagues have been in existence only a few months; and already they have the audacity to stand up to the gentry."

But when the Peasant Leagues began to lead the gentry who refused to discard their opium and pipe, through the streets, when they began to kill the richer gentry in the towns (for instance in the town of Anjun, Sianhu district, in the town Tanchi of the Nilsyain district), when the Society of the October Revolution, the anti-British League, and the victorious Northern Expedition Fraternity brought tens of thousands of people into the streets with large and small banners and iron spades on their shoulders, demonstrating their power, the rich peasants became frightened.

Victory—and Some Changes

The Northern Expedition scored one victory after another, rumours were now spread that Kiukiang was taken, that Wu Pei Fu was definitely smashed; they now displayed red posters with the inscriptions:

"Long live the three democratic principles!"

"Long live the Peasant League!"

The rich peasants were in a frightful rage.

"Long live the Peasant League" meant to them "Long live these people."

The Peasant Leagues were jubilant; the members of the Leagues would say to the rich peasants.

"Should we put you on our lists?"

"Within a month entrance fee will be ten dollars."

Under such circumstances, the rich peasants, gradually started to join the Peasant Leagues. Some of them paid 50 cents to a dollar entrance fee (originally the entrance fee was 100 coppers) but some of them were exempted from entrance fees altogether. Some of them, the "Die-hards," have not joined the League as yet.

As the rich peasants were afraid to come to Leagues in person, they would send 60 or 70-year-old peasants to intercede for them.

The middle peasants (who have no surplus money and live on their harvest) hesitated. They had never thought of revolutionary organisations and were satisfied if they had enough rice and no one came to their doors to settle account with them. Originally, they had no ideas of their own, whatever. They would enquire:

"But will Peasant Leagues be organised?"

"Will the three democratic principles be realised?"

They were of the opinion that these things had nothing to do with the weather.

Peasant Movement in Hunan—continued

"Will the leaders of the Peasant Leagues be able to forecast the weather?"

In the new period, the members of the Peasant Leagues would go to the middle class peasants with their lists and would say:

"Please join the Peasant League."

The middle peasants would reply:

"There is no hurry."

In the second period, when the Peasant Leagues became stronger, the middle peasants began to join them. And although they behaved better in the Leagues than the rich peasants, they were nevertheless vacillating and unreliable.

The only ones who carried on the fight were the poor peasants. They fought from the time of their illegal existence down to the moment of open activities for their leagues. The organisations were their organisations; and the revolution became their revolution.

They alone fought against the gentry and against the "de-sheng." They were the ones who did all the destructive work.

They used to say to the right and middle peasants:

"We have already joined the Peasant League, what are you hanging about the tail for?"

The rich and middle peasants would reply smiling:

"You have no roof to cover you, you have not even got a piece of ground to stand on, why should you not join the League?"

The poor peasants really had nothing to lose. They possessed nothing. It was a fact that they had no roof over their heads and no land to stand on.

And why should they not join the Leagues?

Poor Peasants in Control

From the report of the League of Changsha, we learn that 70 per cent. of the members are poor peasants, 20 per cent. middle peasants, and 10 per cent. rich peasants. The 70 per cent. poor peasants are sub-divided into those who possess nothing and those who have some property.

Among those who possess nothing are classed the people who have no occupation, no land, and no money, but who must either become soldiers, or find other employment or they are obliged to become tramps or bandits. They are one-fifth of the 70 per cent. of poor peasants.

Those who do have some possessions, have either a small strip of land or a little money; they work all their lives as artisans, till their own land, etc. They are half of the 70 per cent. (there are not as many poor peasants in other districts, but the difference is not great).

This mass of poor peasants constitutes the main support of the Peasant Leagues; they are the vanguard who break up the feudal regime, and do the work of the great revolution, which was unknown in the past.

Had there been no poor peasants ("riff-raff" according to the gentry), there would, of course, be no rural

revolution and, of course, it would be impossible to overthrow the gentry and the "de-shengs" and to accomplish a democratic revolution.

As the poor peasants (particularly those who possess nothing) were extremely revolutionary, they took the leadership of the Peasant Leagues. In Chunshan the poorest peasants occupy 60 per cent. of all offices of the rural leagues; those who have some possessions hold 40 per cent. of the positions.

Some Blunders

The leadership of the poor peasants is extremely important. Had there been no poor peasants, there would be no revolution. To remove them from these positions would be tantamount to nullifying the revolution. To break them up would mean to destroy the revolution. Their revolutionary sentiment is not mistaken. They dealt the gentry and nobility a severe blow and now trample them under foot. They were guilty of many "excesses" during the revolutionary period, but those acts were a revolutionary necessity.

Some district governments, Party committees and Peasant Leagues to the south of Hunan made some blunders; they requested that soldiers be sent to defend the landlords and arrested the leaders of the lower peasant leagues.

In two districts, Chunshang and Tsiansian, some of the best members and the chairmen of the Leagues were put in prison. That was a very great mistake; such acts unconsciously support the reactionary party. When the leaders of the Peasant Leagues were arrested, the landlords rejoice; they know whether that is a mistake or not. We must combat the reactionary slogans of the "riff-raff" movement, and the movement of the "lazy peasants," but at the same time we must not help the gentry and "de-shengs" to crush the leaders of the poor peasants.

Gambling and "Bad Men"

Although the leaders of the poor peasants were formerly "possessed of four evils," they have now changed for the better. They themselves combat gambling and banditry; and in those places where the influence of the Peasant Leagues is great, gambling has disappeared and banditry has been eradicated. In many places there is no need any longer to lock one's door at night.

A report from the Chunshang district says that of 100 poor peasant leaders, 85 changed for the better. The remaining 15 have not acquired any good attributes; they constitute a "bad minority"; the existence of a "bad minority" of course, does not prove that what the gentry and "de-shengs" say about them is true.

In connection with these "bad minorities," there must be established a strict discipline in the Peasant Leagues which must be explained to them, but we must not send any soldiers, we must not undermine the confidence of the poor peasants, nor help the gentry and the "de-shengs." That is what matters to us now.

Achievements and Tasks in Factory and Trade Union Work

O. Piatnitsky

(This article is a continuation of the article on "Achievements and Immediate Tasks in Organisation" printed in our issue of May 30th.)

WE find in the industrial centres of all countries that many factory groups are carrying on splendid work and taking the lead in their factories. Here are some instances of such groups.

Austria.—There are 1,700 workers in the Warholov factory, 537 of whom belong to the Communist group. At the elections of the Factory Committee in 1927, the Communists received 1,044 votes and the Social-Democrats 575—together 97 per cent. of all workers belong to the trade unions. The factory trade union committees are composed of 65 Communists and nine Social-Democrats.

Great Britain.—The machine-minders of the reactionary "Daily Mail" refused to print an article directed against the miners prior to the General Strike. This was done under the influence of the Communist group. The group publishes its own shop paper in that institution.

During the General Strike only a few workers of Smith's metal workshops carried out the decisions of the General Council concerning the strike. The group issued a special number of the factory paper in which it called upon the workers to join the strike. In addition to that it organised a meeting outside the factory during the dinner hour, as a result of which all workers left the factory.

America.—It would seem likely to be very difficult to organise a Party nucleus in the Bethlehem steel factory. However, there is a nucleus there which is continually gaining in strength. At the time of the election of the company union managing board, the Communist nucleus put up its own ticket and received 700 votes. The opposing ticket received half that number. As a result of the election, the company union came into the hands of the Communists.

There is an automobile factory employing 3,000 workers. In that factory the members of the Party group circulate their leaflets and factory paper through the conveyor, which carries the various automobile parts in the process of production.

Against the Trusts

The Steel Trust employees in Michigan are carrying on a campaign against the trust, under the leadership of the Communist nucleus, for the introduction of safety measures against mine catastrophes, such as happened some time ago when 40 workers were left for hours down in the mines. This campaign has great success among the workers.

Germany.—The preparatory work in recruiting new trade union members decided on by the A.D.G.B. (German Federation of Trade Unions), and the elections to the "Workers' Congress" were carried out by almost

all Communist factory groups in Berlin, particularly the groups in the large factories. The campaign increased the trade union membership and together with it, the influence of the Party group in the factories and fractions in the trade unions.

France.—There are 1,500 workers in the "X" Metallurgical factory, 1,200 of whom belong to the Red trade unions (an unprecedented percentage in France). A thousand copies of the factory paper are printed. There are 120 members in the group (the recent recruiting campaign brought in 16 new members).

In the "Y" factory there are 2,000 workers of whom only 25 belonged to the Red trade unions before the organisation of the factory group; now about 100 belong to the Red trade unions. At the beginning, the group consisted of only a few members, and now it has 30.

Czecho-Slovakia.—The L. No. 1 factory group (in the Brünn district) had 6 members in 1924: by September, 1926, it already had 32 members. The group organised 48 general meetings of the factory workers and is now issuing its own factory paper.

Prior to the reorganisation of the Sections of the International on the basis of factory groups, the passivity of the Party membership reminded one of the passivity of the members of the Social-Democratic parties. All questions were decided by meetings of Party officials. Local Party conferences or general membership meetings were held rarely. Live local organisation work commenced usually only before some great events, as for instance, before a Party congress or before the elections to some representative organs of the Party. Now the situation has changed considerably. The groups consider and discuss all most important problems facing the Party.

Factory Newspapers

Prior to the re-organisation there were no factory newspapers anywhere. I have not heard of any cases in which the Party organisations issued circulars addressed to the workers in individual factories, even on important events, prior to the re-organisation. At present the factory newspapers are an inseparable part of the work of the groups and play an enormous role in the life of the Party local organisations. This is fully verified by the figures given below (which are by far incomplete) concerning papers issued by the larger sections of the Communist International.

America.—There are 40 factory newspapers issued regularly in America. Of these 38 have a circulation of 1,000 to 2,000.

There is one factory paper in Detroit with a circulation of 10,000 copies; and the "Ford Worker," issued by the group of the Ford automobile factory, has reached a circulation of 20,000 to 22,000 copies. These papers are sold.

Great Britain (incomplete figures).—There are 24

Achievements and Tasks—continued

factory papers regularly issued in London with a circulation of about 8,000 copies; 12 of these papers with a circulation of about 3,300 copies are issued by the railway shop groups.

There are three factory papers in Liverpool with a circulation of 3,300 copies. In South Wales 16 pit papers are issued in the mines.

Germany.—There are 170 factory newspapers issued regularly throughout the country. Of these 101 are issued by the Berlin-Brandenburg organisation, 10 by the Erzgebirge-Vogtland district, 10 in the Hessen-Frankfurt district, and from one to eight papers in each of the remaining districts.

France.—There are 300 factory papers with a circulation of from 100 to 1,000 copies throughout the country. Comrade Crozet published in "Cahiers du Bolchevisme," of 28-2-27 the following figures concerning the number of different factory papers issued in the Paris District.

January ...	19	June ...	35
February ...	30	July ...	66
March ...	52	August ...	46
April ...	49	September ...	88
May ...	34	October ...	70

Czecho-Slovakia (incomplete figures).—There are 120 factory papers published in eight out of the 24 districts of Czecho-Slovakia. Towards the end of 1926 we received statistics concerning the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia indicating that there are 116 factory newspapers. All combined have issued 806 numbers with a circulation of 83,312 copies. This makes an average of seven issues per factory, with a circulation of 103.

In most cases, the factory papers are printed and contain fairly good caricatures. In many countries they are issued illegally, but here and there they are legal and even print advertisements which gives them an income enabling them to continue publication. It may be pointed out that working men and women, including the members of the Social-Democratic parties, National Socialists and Catholics are eager to get hold of the factory papers.

These papers are already a mighty instrument in the struggle for influence on the working class. But this influence could be considerably multiplied if the papers were properly utilised, which unfortunately is not everywhere the case.

Shortcomings

We shall now deal with the shortcomings in the work of the groups and the measures necessary to overcome them.

(a) The factory groups are on an average very small. In a great number of factories there are only one or two Communists. Most of the groups exist in the small and medium enterprises. The percentage of large factories with factory groups is very small, and the groups compared with the number of workers employed are also small. It is characteristic that this is to be noted everywhere, as has already been pointed out above.

America.—In Chicago out of the 24 groups, only 12, with 96 members, are in large factories; the other 12 are in small and medium enterprises.

Out of 300 factory groups in New York, only 12 are in the metallurgical industry and four in the wood-

working industry. All others are in small shops and factories. Out of 300 factory groups, 159 (53 per cent.) are in the tailoring industry. Only 12 groups have more than 10 members each. The rest have three to four members. Many factories employ only one or two Communists.

The Ford factory, employing 60,000 workers, had 120 group members (the number has now been reduced).

Great Britain.—Most of the groups of Great Britain are in the mines. Only a few are in large enterprises. There are groups in very few large factories. The Communist Party does not work with sufficient energy in the textile industry, and the number of groups in that industry is very small. The membership in the groups is also very low.

Germany.—Of the 1,426 factory groups there are:

260 groups in	enterprises	employing	from	3 to	50	workers.
329	"	"	"	50	"	100
540	"	"	"	100	"	500
175	"	"	"	500	"	1,000
71	"	"	"	1,000	"	3,000
28	"	"	"	3,000	"	5,000
20	"	"	"	5,000	"	and over.

Many Groups too Small

If we consider the enterprises employing 500 workers and over as large enterprises we get the following:

21%	of the groups are in large enterprises.
39%	" " " " medium "
40%	" " " " small "

We may take it as a general phenomenon in all countries that the greatest numbers of groups consist of one or two Communists working in a factory. They cannot, of course, organise a group or carry on normal Party work in the factories.

France.—In the organisation report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France of 15-10-26 we read the following:

"... It still remains a fact that the Party recruits skilled workers from the small enterprises. We must go into fully the question of winning over the large factories."

Czecho-Slovakia.—There are groups only in 13 factories, employing 3,200 workers out of the 44 chemical factories in Czecho-Slovakia.

Of the 35 textile factories employing 12,000 workers there are Party groups only in two employing 2,000 workers.

Of the 22 groups in the Ostrau district, 11 are in enterprises employing 31,800 workers.

Victimisation

This general phenomenon is due to the terror used by the employers. Regardless of the fact that the Communist Parties are legal in the countries concerned, the groups are, nevertheless, compelled to work underground. Just as soon as the employers learn, through their spies in the factories, that any of the workers belong to the Communist Party, they discharge them; they know that the reformist trade unions will not defend victimised Communists. Thrown out of work, the Communists find it difficult to secure a job owing to the unemployment prevailing in all countries.

Thus members of the Communist Party of Great

Achievements and Tasks—continued

Britain have been discharged from the big Armstrong and Vickers concerns.

In Germany most of the factory group members were discharged from the Seidel and Neumann dye factory and many other factories.

In the Ostrau district in Czecho-Slovakia the sacking of Communists is a very frequent occurrence.

In France the majority of group members have been discharged from the Michelin, Citroën and Peugeot factories, and the Renault, Paris, automobile factory discharged the entire group, whose membership list fell into the hands of the administration after a strike of 10,000 workers.

In many factories in Germany the Fascists have organised their own groups to counterbalance the work of the Communists. These groups naturally intensify the espionage in the factories. In some countries, like France, Germany and the United States, an extensive espionage system is developing in the factories at the expense of the employers. The result of these terrorist methods is that many Communists do not join the group in their factories, which undoubtedly affects the numerical strength of the groups, and, if they do join them, they remain passive and try to restrain the nucleus from doing any active work. The group members thrown out of factories try to find jobs in small enterprises where the *régimé* is less severe.

Groups that do Nothing

The situation is still worse in connection with the activity of most of the existing factory groups. Many of them, although they are in factories, shops and other enterprises, can be only formally considered as "factory" groups. Their activities are not carried on in their own factories, and they do not deal with the problems confronting their own enterprises. The only actual difference between the former territorial organisations and the above-mentioned groups consists in the fact that now workers of one factory or enterprise meet together whereas formerly Party members living in one neighbourhood met together. They discuss questions concerning Party affairs, they elect delegates to Party conferences, they receive reports of their delegates, and they carry on their work just as it was carried on in the old form of organisation.

There are also factory groups occupied only in technical work, such as the distribution of literature, factory newspapers, posting proclamations and placards. Both types of group exist in all countries.

How can we explain this? In the first place, by the fact that the Party members are still under the influence of the organisational traditions and customs of the Social Democrats, whose organisational forms were adapted to election campaigns, for which purpose they were based in the territorial principle. Besides, in those organisations the legal parties could work unmolested and the terror of the employers could not affect them.

Neglecting the Factory Groups

Secondly, this may be explained by the fact that almost all big mass campaigns were and are still being carried out by the Communist Parties outside of the factory groups, and the every-day work of the groups is not directed by the leading Party organisations so

as to keep it in contact with the political tasks of the Party. Such a policy in the Communist Parties paralyses the factory groups, and renders them incapable of discussing questions connected with the campaigns, or participating in working out plans and putting them into effect. For the same reason the groups have no material on the basis of which they could carry on their agitation among the factory workers. The result is that the members of the groups are torn away from the workers in their factories.

To prove my point, I shall cite some oral and written reports of representatives and organs of the Central Committees of the larger legal Communist Comrade Birch (America) says in his report of 27-12-26 to the Organising Department of the E.C.C.I. the following:

"The campaign in defence of foreign workers was carried on outside of the factory groups. Although some groups were interested in this question and distributed our circulars, their interest did not express itself in a broad mass campaign."* (Re-translated from the Russian.)

"The campaign in favour of the 'Daily Worker' was not sufficiently energetic in the factories. Of the 11 factory groups of one New York ward about which we have information, 9 groups did not secure a single subscription, one group got one subscription and one group 47 subscriptions."

Comrade Birch concluded this part of his report by saying:

"We cannot draw the factory groups into the Party campaigns. Our Party will have to solve this difficult problem."

In the General Strike

Comrade Brown in his report on the Organisational Conference of the Communist Party of Great Britain in October, 1926, speaking on the work of the factory groups during the General Strike and of their rôle in the Party campaign connected with the General Strike, said:

"It must be admitted that our factory groups were weak and did not function properly during the General Strike. In some districts the groups stopped functioning altogether."

Further:

"I do not know to what extent the opinion prevails that our factory groups are of no use to the Party during industrial crises and unrest, but such views concerning our factory groups exist. This is due to the fact that some comrades think that our work must be carried on, in time of crisis, in the trade union organisations."

In the report of a comrade from the 20th District Organisation in Berlin we read:

"Why do we see such passivity? We must make the factory groups political. We must tell the comrades that they should be able to reply to the questions and arguments of the supporters of the Social Democrat. . . . Ever since I have been a member of our factory group it has never

* There are many foreign workers in America; the campaign referred to was a campaign against a Bill which proposed to deprive the foreign workers of some of their rights; it could therefore have been very successful in the factories.

Achievements and Tasks—continued

discussed any of the questions concerning the enterprise. All we hear is reports from delegate Party meetings and about Party quarrels."

In the Renault automobile factory (France) there was a strike of 10,000 workers in May, 1926, which came as an absolute surprise to the Communist group in that factory (from the report of the E.C.C.I. representative). The group which was thus separated from the life of the factory was unable to react to the most immediate and vital problems of the workers in their enterprise. This, together with the terror, has developed among Party members the desire to carry on their Party work in the territorial organisations.

Street Groups

(c) Street Groups.—The street groups have acquired greater importance in many countries than was ascribed to them in the instructions and the resolutions of the International Organisation Conference and the organs of the C.I.

Street groups never played any rôle in the organisational structure of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It is impossible to do without them abroad. Facts have proved this. Originally the street groups were created with the purpose of organising those Party members who were not working in the factories, such as domestic workers, artisans, janitors, porters, intellectuals, etc. The field of activity of the street groups was supposed to be agitation among the proletarian population in their vicinity, distribution of literature in the neighbourhood. They have the same Party rights as the factory groups. In reality, however, the street groups have become transformed into full-fledged Party organisations, while the factory groups eke out a miserable existence.

This is partly due to objective causes, but primarily to the wrong attitude of the higher Party organisations. As an objective condition, we can take the fact that unemployed Communists try to get into the street groups. These comrades cannot be compelled to go out of their way to attend factory group meetings or to carry on Party work among the factory workers if most of them live a distance away. Such demands can be put only to the more active Party members, upon whom the further activity of the factory groups in which they used to work previously largely depends.

Why Factory Groups Fail

It is wrong if workers and clerks working in factories where there are factory groups or where such could be organised do not want to participate in the Party work in these factories, but prefer to join the street groups. Such cases are entirely due to the local and district committees. These committees do not combat this phenomenon, but, on the contrary, they carry on most of their campaigns through the street groups, leaving the factory groups in many cases without any leadership.

There are in America 440 factory groups and 400 street groups. On an average the factory groups have 26.5 per cent. of the membership, the street groups 60.2 per cent. and the old Party organisations 13.3 per cent.

The figures in the various towns are as follows :

Town.	p.c. of factory groups membership.	p.c. of street groups membership.	p.c. of territorial membership.
Philadelphia ...	14	62	24
Chicago ...	35	58	7
New York ...	32	43	25
Buffalo ...	30	70	—
Cleveland ...	25	75	—
Boston ...	23	53	24

The average percentage of the factory group membership in some German districts is somewhat higher than the percentage in America. The factory groups of Berlin and Ludwigshafen contain the majority of Party members, which is a sign that the groups in those towns are working properly and receive support and real leadership from the higher Party organs, as a result of which the members are not anxious to join the street groups.

Comrades may think that since the street groups are so strong numerically they must also be active. However, in most cases their passivity reminds us of the passivity of the old territorial organisations. The street groups revive only before elections to some representative bodies. In this respect they have much experience, as the old organisations were prior to their reorganisation engaged only in this kind of work.

It was pointed out above that most of the campaigns were carried out in the residential districts, but it need not be concluded that the work was carried out by the street groups. The campaigns were carried out by the members of the factory groups after their working hours and on holidays when they were home. (There were cases in Berlin when members of factory groups were appointed to canvass from house to house in their neighbourhood during the various campaigns.)

Local Officials

(d) The Question of Local Officials.—The question of local officials is very important. In the old organisational forms it was sufficient if there were two or three officials in an organisation to handle the work. On an average there used to be two or three officials to every 100 to 150 Party members. With the reorganisation on the group basis a minimum of one official (group leader) is necessary for every group.

To this must be added the fact that the reorganisation made necessary the creation of many locals in the large towns (there are over 100 in Berlin) which necessitates more officials in the local and district committees to carry on the work. We hear from all legal organisations that there is a shortage of Party officials, which greatly interferes with getting the factory groups to be active.

Many comrades give suggestions of how to create new ranks of officials. Some propose to raise the level of Marxian education, others propose the organisation of Party schools. Of course, this is necessary, there can be no doubt about that. But new officials can be obtained primarily through the activation of the existing factory groups. Only by means of active practical work in the groups can we create experienced and tenacious Communists; only from them can we add to their ranks and strengthen the entire Party apparatus.

(e) Help by the Party Committees to the Groups.—

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As has already been pointed out, the successful work of the Party depends on the proper functioning and good work of the factory and street groups. No matter how difficult the conditions of Communist work in the factories may be, work can be carried on. The splendid results of the activities of some of the factory groups in every country prove this. We cannot explain the bad work of the street and factory groups through the lack of Party officials. It is quite possible to improve the work of the groups even with those forces which the Parties have, provided they are properly and rationally utilised. This is possible if the work of the lower groups and organisations is given proper leadership. The main reason for the poor work of the groups is the lack of attention they get from the higher Party organs. When some internal Party discussion is in progress, particularly before elections, the groups are given speakers and plenty of material. But in the every-day work of the groups they receive neither.

Left to Their Fate

At the Organisation Conference of the Communist Party of Great Britain in October, 1926, Comrade Brown, reporting for the C.C. of the C.P.G.B., said that the factory groups were organised and then left to their own fate. No one ever gave them a thought.

He said that the Organisation Department of the C.P.G.B. in investigating the causes for the decline of membership of some of the organisations came to the conclusion in one of its letters that the insufficient support and control on the part of the respective Party committees was largely to blame. The district committees send instructions of a general character to the local Party committees and groups. There are very few cases in which the local district Party committees give any concrete instructions to the factory groups applicable to the conditions prevailing in the respective factories.

What has been said above is confirmed in almost exactly the same words by the Berlin-Brandenburg district committee in its report of December, 1926. A comrade from the 9th Berlin District, speaking about the recruiting campaign, came to the conclusion that there is not enough material, and that it is necessary to publish a popular pamphlet on the question of rationalisation.

Comrade Crozet speaks in No. 62 of "Cahiers du Bolchevisme" (organ of the C.P. of France) of the same situation. He also arrives at the same conclusions, namely, that so long as the higher Party committees do not come to the support of the groups in their work everything will remain as before.

It is essential for the legal Communist Parties to inaugurate an energetic campaign towards the elimination of the defects in the work of the groups, and for the improvement of the leadership and control. They must supply the groups with speakers and printed material, needed by the workers' groups, concerning elections, recruiting and other political campaigns. Only then will it be possible to liven up, to raise the activity and the political life of the groups.

Only under these conditions will the groups be able to promote the necessary Party cadres, without which

the Communist Parties will be unable to become mass proletarian Parties.

Work in the Trade Unions

It has already been remarked in the previous article that although the Communist Parties exercise a strong ideological influence on the working class, within the trade unions they are very weak.

During the struggle of the British miners the C.P. of Germany did not succeed in enforcing resolutions on material aid for the British miners, in preventing the introduction of overtime work in the mines or in prohibiting the export of coal to England in any of the national unions. Even more: the C.P. of Germany has so far been unable to stop the treachery of the German Federation of Trade Unions towards the entire German working class (practical dropping of the eight-hour day, rationalisation at the cost of the workers, which has led to an army of 1,500,000 unemployed), and the treachery of central committees of the individual unions in the conclusion of agreements with the employers.

The explanation of that lies in the fact that the C.P.G. has no majority in any union.

The C.P.G.B. is in no better position: during the General Strike and the miners' struggle the C.P.G.B. and the Minority movement played a conspicuous rôle in the Trades Councils, strike committees and councils of action, but they succeeded neither in defeating the disgraceful compromise which the railway unions concluded with the companies after the General Strike, nor in the agitation for material support for the miners in the most critical moment of their struggle in any one of the big unions. The same applies in outline to the carrying out of the embargo. In spite of the popularity of this slogan among the British working class, the C.P.G.B. and the Minority movement did not succeed anywhere in preventing the transport and unloading of coal. The reasons for this are the same as in Germany.

At the special conference of the Minority Movement early in 1927 trade union organisations with a membership of 1,080,000 were represented. In spite of the very great number of unions in the trade union movement, no union of any importance is affiliated as a whole to the Minority Movement.

As for Czecho-Slovakia and France, where there are independent red trade unions, over which the respective Communist Parties exercise an indisputable influence, the conditions there are in general only a little better than in Germany and England.

Is It Good Enough?

Can the Communist Parties in these capitalist countries be contented with such a state of affairs, that although they can lead great masses in demonstrations and receive millions of votes at elections, they are at the same time unable to prevent the reformist trade union leaders from betraying the interests of the workers day by day?

How can this be altered? In the first place, by the Communists in the unions doing their work energetically and in a determined fashion in all directions, by concentrating in Communist fractions, which should be rightly directed by the Party. It cannot be maintained

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that up to the present the sections of the C.I. have fulfilled these conditions.

Before all it must be laid down that not all Communists are organised in trade unions. We are not concerned here with merely formal obedience to the decision on the entry of Communists into trade unions. Actual circumstances make it clear that we cannot strengthen our influence in the trade unions of all Communists do not work in the trade unions. The Communist Party by its programme, its slogans, its real fight against the bourgeoisie, attracts the workers to itself. In the most difficult elections workers who are not at all Communists give their votes to the C.P. The Communist workers find themselves in surroundings on which they can and must exercise influence. It may be assumed that every Communist, on the average, has around him ten workers whom he can influence. Therefore every Communist who remains out of touch with his Union is refusing to exercise influence on those around him; therefore he does not promote any increase in the Communist influence in the trade unions: on the contrary, he helps towards a decrease in this influence.

Even more, such Communists check the growth of class trade unions. How, in actual fact, can Communist Parties in capitalist countries perform successful recruiting work for class trade unions among the workers and employees if all Communists are not organised in trade unions?

Members Not in Unions

Statistical statements of the Org. Bureau of the E.C.C.I. on this question from all countries show that many Party members are not organised in trade unions, and by reason of that the influence of the Communist Parties in the trade unions is weakened. We give below figures from a few of the legal Communist Parties relating to the question.

Czecho-Slovakia.—According to statistics given in March, 1927, figures relating to 92,691 members of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia (out of a total of 138,000) show a trade union membership of 49.2 per cent. The peasants, handicraftsmen, small shopkeepers, professional workers, housewives, etc., who are members of the Party, and are not eligible for trade union membership, total 22,936 or 24.7 per cent. We can therefore say that 26 per cent. of the Party members capable of being in trade unions remain outside of them.

America.—The statistics of the Org. Bureau of the American Party show that only 40 per cent. of the membership of the Workers' (Communist) Party are organised in trade unions.

Britain.—At the Organisation Conference of the C.P.G.B. it was reported that 90 per cent. of the Party membership were in trade unions. The C.P.G.B. is in this respect an exception. On the average not more than 50 to 55 per cent. of the members of the Communist Parties are organised in trade unions.

The Communist Parties of Great Britain, Germany and Italy have, of course, strong positions in the Amsterdam trade unions (in these countries there is no split in the trade union movement). Thanks to the energetic work of the Italian Communists, the *Confederazione del Lavoro* (Amsterdam), which had been dissolved by the

reformist trade union leaders in deference to the Fascists, has again begun to work. Italian Communists have strong influence in the Trades Councils of the industrial towns and in the large unions. Unfortunately the sphere of activity of the Italian class trade unions is very limited, since it is obligatory on all workers to enter the Fascist trade unions (contributions are collected when wages are paid), and only Fascist trade unions are permitted to conclude agreements with the employers.

The C.P.G.B. has great influence in some unions and in the local branches. Not long ago Party locals in a few districts succeeded in getting their members elected as secretaries of trade union organisations (in England elections of salaried trade union officials occur very seldom).

Fractions in Germany

It can be said that the C.P. of Germany, in the elections which took place a short while ago, had in all the big trade unions on the average not less than 25 per cent. of the members behind it. In many instances the number of votes which were given to the Left opposition increased in comparison with the previous elections. The position of the German Communist Party in the trade unions is becoming firmer from day to day. That has already been admitted by the reformist leaders. Their work would be much more successful if the 20 per cent. or so of Communists who are still outside the unions would become active union members, and if the fractions worked in a better fashion than those existing in 1926 did. I think it is necessary to emphasise that the successes attained in the trade unions in the course of the last year are due to the existence of the Communist fractions in the unions, although this work is far short of what could be called good.

There already exist trade union fractions, if not everywhere. What about their activity?

The district committee of the Ruhr area states in its report of October, 1926, that there are 213 trade union fractions in its area, of which 40 per cent. work very badly, 40 per cent. work not particularly well and 20 per cent. work well. (The percentage of fractions not working relatively to those working badly is not only in Germany but in all other countries higher than the percentage of factory groups not working relatively to those working badly.) If 20 per cent. of the Communist fractions are working well it shows that Communist work in the trade unions is possible; it has only to be done effectively.

But why do the Communist fractions in the trade unions function so badly?

Fractions that Don't Meet

One of the causes is that the fractions do not include all Communist trade union members, and all members of the fraction do not turn up to fraction meetings.

In the Pennsylvania district of the United Mine Workers of America there are 650 Communists, of whom only 75 are in the fraction. In Berlin in January, 1927, of the 14,000 Party trade unionists only 1,026 took part in the fraction meetings. The fraction in the German Metal Workers' Union, Stuttgart district, includes 209 comrades. Not more than 10 per cent., however, take

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part in the meetings. At the last general meeting of the union in Frankfurt only four out of 209 Communists were present.

The cause of this defect is that the Party organisations have not taken it upon themselves to make clear to the existing fractions their importance, and to show them how practical work must be done. The Party committees do not control the work of the fractions systematically.

Unfortunately it often happens that our comrades, although they make the right demands, corresponding to the interests of the masses, do nothing among the unorganised workers and the trade unionists to further these demands. In the Ruhr district, for example, the C.P. in their fight against the lengthening of the seven-hour shift put forward the slogan, which was very popular among the miners: "From April 1st, 1927, all work in the pits after seven hours will cease." The C.P. in the Ruhr district, however, did insufficient work among the miners and the trade unions organisations to forces imilar resolutions from the mining union controlled by the reformists to draw them into the struggle for the seven-hour day. Such work was even more essential since the delegate conference of miners in the Ruhr area took place on the 20th March.

How inexperienced the Communists are with regard to work in the trade unions and how little they understand how to counteract the crushing manœuvres of the Social Democratic officials by quickly grasping the situation and by adopting the correct course, the following example will show:

This example is drawn from the report of a comrade in the Trade Union Bureau of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party on the conference of

officials of the miners' union in the Hindenburg district (Upper Silesia). Among the 360 who participated in the conference 16 or 17 were Communists, but according to the statement of the local Party organisation there should have been not less than 65 Communists present. And the comrades who did attend the conference brought forward, together with resolutions on very important questions which were intelligible to the miners, such as wage demands, wage agreements, overtime, contract work and unemployment, a resolution of no confidence against the Social-Democratic chairman of the local administration of the union. The Communists had previously fixed their speakers on all these questions. Five comrades were to speak on the principal questions. Instead of pressing the most important questions into the foreground, our comrades allowed themselves to be caught by the manœuvres of the Social-Democratic Committee, who decided to place the greatest emphasis on the resolution of no confidence before dealing with the very important questions concerning the miners.

As though it were not enough, that the Communists allowed this manœuvre of the Social-Democrats, they put up at this point only one speaker, on whom the Social-Democrats fell with all their might. The Social-Democrats succeeded in evading a treatment of the main question, and avoided any serious criticism on the part of the Communists. The resolution of no confidence could not be convincingly put forward and fell through. After this defeat the Communists refrained from voting against the resolutions brought in by the Social-Democrats on other questions, which was used by the latter to its fullest extent in their agitation against the C.P.

The mistakes which the Communist trade union fractions commit in their work can be traced chiefly to the lack of support and right direction in their work on the part of the Party leadership responsible for the work in trade unions.

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The I.L.P. Conference

J. T. Murphy

IT was expected that three questions would dominate the Conference of the Independent Labour Party at Leicester during Easter week, namely, the war on China; the Trade Union Bill and the relations of the I.L.P. to Mr. MacDonald. These three questions did dominate the Conference, but not in this order of importance. The last question appears to have outweighed all other questions. That it is an important question no one will dispute, though it does not say much for the I.L.P. that the most important questions of the day should be relegated to a back seat. In speaking thus we by no means regard this question as a personal question, although the fate of Mr. MacDonald is involved. The decision of the Conference carried by 312 to 118 votes is that Mr. MacDonald can no longer be a member of the I.L.P. delegation to the Labour Party Conference. This is the essence of the decision when all the trappings have been removed.

This decision has been forced upon the I.L.P. since it put forward the policy of "Socialism in our Time," and the demand for the "minimum wage and family allowances." This "new" policy of the I.L.P. was occasioned by the experiences of the Labour Government. Considerable discontent existed in the I.L.P., a discontent which has been continually growing against the policy of gradualism to which Mr. MacDonald subscribed. Many I.L.P.'ers had their eyes opened by the Labour Government. They openly declared that the Labour Government was not likely to reach Socialism either in our time or anybody else's time if it continued to move at the exceedingly slow pace it had established. Indeed, many are of the opinion that with every step forward it took two steps backward. This gave rise to a discussion in the I.L.P. as to what should be the programme of the next Labour Government. Its feelings were crystallised in the slogan "Socialism in our Time," and the demand for the living wage.

MacDonald's Attack

Mr. MacDonald and other leading members of the I.L.P., but especially MacDonald, at once began to hammer the I.L.P., and even though he was a delegate to the Labour Party Conference from the Independent Labour Party, he publicly declared that the next Labour Government, no more than the last, would not be dictated to as to the order of the measures which it would take to introduce Socialism. He also wrote that "in the I.L.P. minimum wage and family allowance proposals there is a lack of practical imagination together with a super-abundance of ill-founded prophecy as to the result of this act or that. It is political jerry-building of a high order." Indeed, so consistent and fierce have been the attacks of MacDonald upon the I.L.P. of which he was previously chairman, that the secretary of the party stated to the Conference that MacDonald "was opposed to the party on not one issue, but every issue that the I.L.P. has raised at the Labour Party Conference. It is not that Mr. MacDonald differs from us on details of policy, it is that his attitude of mind is wholly

different from the mind of the I.L.P." Again, he said: "that the differences between MacDonald and the National Administrative Council were not on one issue but they covered the whole range of party policy, both at home and abroad, and nobody could suggest that MacDonald represented in all these respects, even a minority of the I.L.P."

With such a wide divergence one cannot be surprised that the I.L.P. at last raises objections to MacDonald as a delegate representing their party. Indeed, it is surprising, nevertheless typical, that the I.L.P. has not raised before now the question of MacDonald's membership. But no, the I.L.P. is one of those remarkable organisations which permits its leading members to discredit it in public and imposes no obligations on its members to carry out the policy to which the party subscribes. For example, Mr. Shinwell openly defended MacDonald in this Conference, severely attacked the policy of the I.L.P., questioned its conclusions, and yet was elected to the new executive of the Party. The observation of the leading organ of this party the "New Leader," says that his election was due "no doubt as a tribute to his debating powers." When this is taken in relation to the fulsome apologies and hero worship that have been subsequently given to MacDonald by the I.L.P. one is driven to the conclusion that the decision has been taken as the result of pressure from below and not as the result of a fundamental change in the leadership of the Party. It is symptomatic of the differentiation process going on in the ranks of the working class, which the I.L.P. is trying to meet by a swing to the left, by the use of more radical phrases. MacDonald had become so deeply involved in the fight against all left tendencies in the Labour movement that it was no longer possible for him even to subscribe to left phrases, hence the sacrifice of MacDonald as the I.L.P. delegate to the Labour Party Conference.

I.L.P. Once Revolutionary

The I.L.P. has thus reached another turning point in its career. When first it appeared on the stage of history, nearly forty years ago, it was playing a distinctly revolutionary role in the British Labour movement. It played, along with a number of other small Socialist parties, a pioneer role in detaching the working class from the old traditional political parties of the bourgeoisie and laying the foundations for an independent political Labour movement. This was an important historical task. By its fight for an independent Labour movement, it got a grip of the apparatus of the trade unions under the banner of "labour independence."

But the further they went in this direction the further away they moved from Socialism. Indeed, they have always had Socialism before them as a "far-off divine event" without any definite relation to the daily tasks which they set before them. It was thus easy for middle class people to utilise this party as a vehicle for public notoriety and the means of contact with the Labour movement in general. As a matter of fact, up to

The I.L.P. Conference—continued

1918 the middle classes, the intellectuals, etc., had no means of entrance into the Labour movement other than through the Socialist parties. But in 1918 the Labour Party changed from being a party of affiliated organisations to a Party of affiliated organisations plus individual members. From that moment it was no longer necessary for the trade-union element to pass into the Labour Party through the door of the I.L.P. and the growth of the individual membership sections of the Labour Party has undoubtedly outrivalled the I.L.P. and compelled it to play a new role. Especially was this the case with the rise of the Communist Party. Its job was on the one hand to show there was no need for a Communist Party, and that there was room for all revolutionaries within the I.L.P., and on the other hand, to keep this Party loyal to the leadership of the Labour Party which was dominated by its own right wing elements.

This role of a left-centrist party was comparatively easy until the advent of the Labour Government. Even MacDonald and Clynes could play this game until this new experience forced new issues upon them. It was comparatively easy, so long as Labour was in opposition, without any responsibility for the application of its policy, or bound by any principle of loyalty to the principles of the class struggle. But once Labour had assumed responsibility for the administration of the capitalist State the contrast between words and deeds compelled the Labour Party leadership and the I.L.P. to face up to the new situation.

Cleavage in I.L.P.

The Labour Party leadership, by a series of events over which it had no control, found itself at the head of a great mass movement which had lost faith in the bourgeois parties, and the possibility before it of achieving a parliamentary majority at no distant date. Impressed by this possibility and deeply committed to the bourgeois policy of the nine months in office it could no longer play the role of Socialist agitator simultaneous with that of bourgeois statesman. Hence the cleavage began to show itself in the I.L.P., due to the fact that it had to distinguish itself from the Labour Party or become completely absorbed by it. This paved the way to the advent of the Clyde leaders as the banner bearers of the I.L.P. They were fitted for this purpose in that all of them are accustomed to the use of revolutionary phrases and come from essentially working class constituencies. They only could rescue the I.L.P. from absorption, but to do so they had to differentiate themselves to some extent from MacDonald and Clynes and Co.

But this did not mean that the I.L.P. itself, or that the I.L.P. as a party, was going to play a new role. On the contrary, the action against MacDonald was taken to enable the I.L.P. to pursue its old role of hindering the movement of the masses towards the Communist Party. This is seen at once in the new slogans that are being issued by the I.L.P. The Party Conference reaffirmed the demand for "Socialism in our time," but does this mean that a fundamentally different policy is to be pursued from that of the Labour Party? Does it mean that new obligations are to be imposed upon

the members of the Independent Labour Party within the Labour Party? Not at all! It simply means that the I.L.P. expresses a different opinion as to what a Labour Government ought to do when it secures a majority.

Opposed—Yet "Loyal"

That it means nothing more than an opinion, is clearly seen in the attitude of the I.L.P. to MacDonald and all its members who hold positions in the Labour Party and in the trade union movement. Whilst formally detaching Mr. MacDonald from the delegation of the Labour Party, it pronounces its loyalty to Mr. MacDonald as a leader of the Labour Party, of which it is a part, and its intention of voting for him as the treasurer of the Labour Party. That their opposition to MacDonald is a sham opposition is, therefore, quite clear. And all their talk of fighting for Socialism in our time is so much froth.

If further proof is required the attitude of the I.L.P. Conference to the Trade Union Bill gives this additional proof. All that it has got to say is, that it will support any campaign initiated by the Labour Party to oppose the Bill. Mr. David Kirkwood declared that "the Trade Union Bill proclaimed the class war in all its hideousness." Did this mean that the I.L.P. under such circumstances was intent on taking sides on behalf of the working class and prepared to answer the challenge of the government by a distinct lead to the working class that would seriously fight the Government? Not at all. Every member of the I.L.P. Conference, every leader in that Conference, knew full well that the Labour Party leadership and the General Council of the Trades Union Congress were not, and are not, intent upon a real fight against the government. It gives no lead to the Labour Party in which its leaders could dominate, and waits for the next Labour Government.

Of course, it is not merely coincidence that the I.L.P. took up a similar attitude 12 months ago when the General Strike and the preparations for it became the burning questions before the working class movement. It is consistent with its whole career. It barks a great deal, but does not bite. It is like a toothless old creature that has a grouse against the world and a great capacity for dreaming, but no guts for a fight.

An I.L.P. Speech

Mr. Maxton's speech is an I.L.P. speech through and through. He said: "Industrial peace on the basis of poverty, subordination and degradation, is a thing not to be dreamt of unless the people of this land have every vestige of spirit driven out of them." He denounced the attack of the Government through its trade union legislation and said: "We shall oppose that legislation in the House of Commons and in the country. We shall try to prevent it becoming the law of the land. But that to me seems a negative way of facing the situation. I believe that all sections of the movement should reply to this attack by going out to make the movement stronger than ever it has been before: to double the number of our trade unions, to double the numbers of our Labour Party members, to get an I.L.P. of a hundred thousand men and women, every one to be a fighter and the shock troops of that Labour army and go out on

The I.L.P. Conference—continued

a definite offensive against capitalism with, as the key objective, a demand for a living wage for all. The approach of that achievement to be first made at this stage by an immediate demand for a 20 per cent. increase of the wages of all sections of the working class."

Did the I.L.P. Conference set this demand before the Labour Party? No. Did it indicate any ways and means of opposing the legislation? No. Did Mr. Maxton indicate anything which the Conference omitted? No. Did he say what was to be done with this enlarged trade union movement? Did he say what was to be done with the increased number of Labour Party members, or the hundred thousand "shock troops"? Or what he meant by this offensive against capitalism, or how he was to achieve his 20 per cent. increase in the wages of the working classes? There is no indication. Yet Mr. Maxton knows, and the I.L.P. Conference knew, that in Parliament the Conservatives have an overwhelming majority and can automatically put the trade union legislation through without accepting any amendment whatever.

If we examine the I.L.P. proposals with regard to a living wage, we find they consist of the appointment of a commission by the next government "to ascertain as to what the living wage should be in relation to human needs, and the standards of civilised life." So it would appear that this question of the living wage is postponed for an inquiry by the next Labour Government, which according to the policy of the I.L.P. will be led by Mr. MacDonald, who is opposed to the living wage policy and, therefore, to the inquiry. What the next step will be no one knows, as obviously the I.L.P. is opposed to fighting Mr. MacDonald and clearing out the leadership.

How do We Get It?

But Mr. Maxton is a little more specific when he demands a 20 per cent. increase of wages. What is the procedure to be taken? Does Mr. Maxton propose that every trade union shall immediately table a demand for a 20 per cent. increase? And, if so, what is to be done if the employers refuse? Shall the unions take strike action? And if so, shall it be a series of sectional strikes in which we know full well the employers can win? Or shall it be the General Strike? If the General Strike, what about the threat to the State which such a General Strike of necessity makes? Mr. Maxton says never a word about this matter. Yet if he is serious and if the I.L.P. is serious, surely the logic of their proposals should be examined and the I.L.P. should state clearly what it proposes to do in these circumstances. But no, this demand is left in the air only in order to give the appearance of being radical. Instead we are subject to a moral lecture and told that "it is the place of the I.L.P. to lay stress on the mind and will of man as the determining factor in bringing about the change in social and economic affairs and to work for and propagate Socialism with speed but without catastrophe." Possibly it may dawn upon Maxton and the I.L.P. that it is necessary to indicate upon what the mind and will of man shall concentrate, and how to concentrate, and the possibility of achieving that upon which we concentrate our mind and forces; to show how Socialism can be achieved

with speed, or even by degrees, without catastrophe to capitalism. On these questions neither Maxton nor the I.L.P. have ever given a straightforward answer to the working class.

It is this hypocritical phrasemongering which characterises the I.L.P. leaders on every issue, that enables the bourgeois leaders to mock at the Labour movement with scorn and to treat it with contempt. What is the use, for example, of Maxton and his colleagues blethering about the lack of understanding and co-operation between the Labour and Socialist International and the Third International, when on every important issue before the working class of Britain they refuse a united front with the section of the Communist International which stands at its very doorstep. Even in this very Conference, where Maxton declared for the unity of the two Internationals, he refused, whether under instructions or not matters little, to read the telegram of the Communist Party of Great Britain appealing for a united front on the question of the war on the Chinese Revolution and opposition to the Trade Union Bill. He refused to admit the delegates of the Communist Party who had been deputed to convey fraternal greetings and appeal to the Conference for united action on these great issues before the working class movement. All talk of the unity of the two Internationals under such circumstances can only be regarded as hypocrisy and political humbug.

The Test of China

On the question of British intervention in China, it would appear that the I.L.P. Conference passed once more another radical resolution. It protested against the military measures taken by the British Government in China, it declared that a state of open war was steadily developing, called for the withdrawal of armed forces from China and of warships from Chinese waters, demanded an impartial inquiry into the occurrences at Nanking and insisted upon the "right of the Chinese people to go their own road without interference from outside powers." This resolution would be far more welcome if the I.L.P. was really serious in its demand. But there is no evidence of its seriousness in this matter. It retains MacDonald, Clynes, Snowden, Shinwell and others as members of the I.L.P. who are flatly opposed to such a policy, who openly repudiate it. Of the hundred odd members of Parliament who belong to the I.L.P., none will be brought to task when they follow MacDonald's leadership instead of that implied in this resolution. Of the members of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, who are members of the I.L.P., none will be expected to fight for this resolution becoming the policy of the General Council. Once more the I.L.P. barks and does not bite.

Under these circumstances there is no wonder that the I.L.P. has to report a decline of 126 branches during the same period that the Communist Party can report an increase of 150 local organisations. The Leicester Conference of the I.L.P. was conceived as a manoeuvre to set the I.L.P. free from responsibility for the political leadership of the Labour Party that it might propagate Socialism in "nobody's time," that it might pose as a fighter for Socialism without obligations to make deeds correspond with words. But its bluff is called. A party cannot live on phrases, and that is all that is left in the programme of the I.L.P.



Gradualness

SOCIALISM BEFORE ITS REALISATION. Studies in Social Democratic Views and Present-day Politics. Nils Karleby.

THERE is certainly no lack of theoretical effusions from Social Democrats of the most different countries. It seems to us, however, advisable to give some attention to the present work. This book is the first attempt at a recapitulation of and theoretical foundation for the Swedish variety of Reformism, and is, therefore, of a certain importance. For the Swedish Social Democracy excels, even to-day, by its strength and comparative unity.

The author of this book, which appeared in the early part of 1926 (originally a worker and from his early days a collaborator with the leader of Swedish Social Democracy, Hjalmar Branting) took part in a Socialisation Commission existing at that time under Branting's Government. There he came in close contact with bourgeois economists such as Cassel, Vicksell and other followers of the Viennese school of economists (Böhm-Bawerk, Meuger) like Fisher and Marshall. In this milieu of ministerial Socialism, bourgeois economics and Manchester Liberalism, the first theoretical work of Swedish Social Democracy was born.

Karleby is ambitious. His book embraces practically all the problems of Marxism. It will not, therefore, be possible for us to examine all sections of this work.

In the Introduction he professes the "improved" Marxism of Max Adler, from which, however, he expressly extracts from the start the economic teachings of Marx.

He lays it down that in particular the development since the year 1918 has shown that Branting and his followers have demonstrated greater theoretical clarity and independence and practical qualifications than Marx's "official successor," Karl Kautsky.

"Under the pressure of reality," he says, "the entire International has accepted the old point of view of Branting, while the German 'radical' doctrine died out." (p. 8.) The book is, therefore, directed against the "German Marxism" of Kautsky before 1918, and puts in its place Branting's theory.

In the first part of his book, Karleby deals with the origin of Socialism. In this his ideas are rather far-fetched, and he finds the origin of Socialism exclusively in the "humanist principle that is common to the ideas of the French Revolution and the Reformation." This is the principle of freedom which he opposes to the "authority principle" or feudalism and Catholicism.

"The practical origin of the modern working class movement does not lie in a contradictory principle to the bourgeois class, but in the fact that the working class is of the opinion (!) that the bourgeoisie, while caring for their own material interests, betrays the common ideal. The struggle of the working class is the **completion** of [author's emphasis] and not a break with the work of the bourgeoisie." (p. 16).

Having postulated a community of interest, Karleby still has to explain the existence of Social Democracy in its Swedish form. On this subject he goes back to the theory of natural rights, in which he sees the basis (the intellectual basis) of Socialism.

The Social Democratic conception of society, which he develops still further, is an adaptation of certain parts of the Communist Manifesto to the German reformist writings on the well-enough known theory of community of interests. It serves merely as a basis for Karleby's wider theoretical analysis of the materialist conception of history. Karleby is as much of a Marxist as Max Adler. He acknowledges Marx as a talented theoretician for whom, however, it was not possible to live to see Branting's wonders in Sweden, in consequence of which he could not reach the height of historical understanding, as Karleby has.

He sees in the materialist conception of history "a guide to the investigation and understanding of the social reality of history." It stands in no connection with philosophic conceptions.

Immediate Problems

After having explained that the workers are continuing what the bourgeoisie has begun, a little corner is assigned to historical materialism, in which it is permitted to live its life peacefully. This done, the talented theoretician can turn to more immediate problems, namely, those which are the immediate tasks of Social Democracy in Sweden.

For this he must first create a whole regiment of theoretical premises. We content ourselves here with their enumeration.

(1) The socialisation of property in the means of production is according to Karleby, nothing else than the common participation of all in the goods which are the property of the community. (p. 53.) And this participation finds in him a highly original expression.

"The working class has won through social legislation the right of voting on the employment of private property, and so . . . becomes a partner in the national capital."

So wonderful and yet so simple!

(2) The setting aside of the unpleasant by-products of Marxist theory. In spite of all attempts to depict it otherwise, certain principles of capitalist economy in Sweden contradict Marxism. On this ground he replaces the several laws of Marxian economics by corresponding ones derived from the Viennese school. The theory of marginal utility becomes the backbone of his economic conception.

(3) The idea of exploitation involves certain difficulties for every good Social Democrat who believes in being on good terms with the bourgeoisie. Marx cannot, therefore, call a Rockefeller (the example is Karleby's) who began empty-handed and is now a millionaire, an exploiter. On this ground Karleby explains the profit of the entrepreneur

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Gradualness—continued

as his wages, in addition to which he must receive compensation corresponding to the risks he has taken. Entrepreneur's profit is a form of income from labour—so he says. And further, unemployment is a lack of access to the desired income, not a lack of work. (p. 160.)

For there is always work, but there are no wages. Unfortunately it is not permitted us, within the limits of this periodical, to engage in the task of analysing the exposition of Marxian economic theories, which Karleby gives in further detail. We linger a little over the last part, which justifies the title of the book: Karleby's scheme of socialisation.

Where's the Socialism?

Since we have a certain interest in the Socialist transformation of the world, let us listen to the practical man with the experience of the Swedish Socialisation Commission. Just a few gems from the scheme, which is neatly tabulated under headings and sub-headings. For a Socialist transformation are required: "the triumph of a social relativist conception; the establishment of production and property rights on the basis of this conception, production in the interests of its development and the conception of the working class as participators with all other groups in society, according to their influence. With the collectivisation of production even greater sections of these groups will approach nearer to the conception of the working class, even though nominally still their opponents."

"Ballot papers and purchasing power are different methods of exercising this influence (also social relations). General equality of purchasing power is now as valid as general equality of voting." "Competition remains, in order to set going the best forces in society. A planned economy is impossible. The different forms of income (income from work, rents, entrepreneurs' profits) also remain."

That is only a selection of Karleby's points. He also proposes a scheme for the work of reform which social democracy has to perform. But we will not go further into that. He himself best recapitulates his theory in the last words of this short thesis.

"In giving a lead, no mechanical theory of exploitation, which in reality has no significance, but is only a general ethical point of departure, is of use. Of as little use is the

a priori demand for a unified system of production; but the demand of equal rights for the working class. . . .

Where, among all that, is Socialism?

Karleby's Socialism is the most barren and stale liberal conception. And if we decipher the sense of the book, we can epitomise it in one sentence, which he has placed as the motto of his book. "We are all Socialists now!"

Acceptable to Henry Ford

Undoubtedly! Every bourgeois, not only every liberal, but also any pig-headed reactionary, can accept Karleby's programme. He wrote his book when the Social Democrats alone formed the Royal Government. He wished to give the impression in his book, that Social Democrats actually fight for Socialism in their own manner. No doubt! But for Socialism as dished out by Karleby, even Ford might fight and eventually every other capitalist.

Swedish Social Democracy, shows itself in this recognised theoretical basis to be against Marxism, against the class war even in its most elementary forms, and for collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

And herein lies the value and originality of this theoretical study—in the impudence with which the ministerial Socialism of Branting is covered up with the cloak of representation of the interests of the working class.

The theoretical level of the working class in Sweden is very low. Social Democracy in Sweden has known for years how to withhold nearly all Marxist literature from the Swedish proletariat. For this reason Swedish Social Democracy could with impunity allow itself such an unconcealed trip into the camp of bourgeois ideology.

Karleby's book, however, in the introduction, claims to be an epitome of Branting's theory and practice which, "under the pressure of reality, has been accepted by the entire International." Social Democracy in Germany has kept silent about the book. It should, however, be made available to German Social Democrats. It is the confession of a beautiful soul, of a naive man, who puts down in black and white what Kautsky and others have not yet the courage to write openly, the complete turning away from the working class and their doctrine of class struggle, their turning away from Marxism and the replacement of Marxist phrases by the theories of the bourgeoisie.

KARL JOHANNSON.

